

VARIOUS

THE CONTINENTAL
MONTHLY, VOL 6, NO 5,
NOVEMBER 1864

Various

**The Continental Monthly,
Vol 6, No 5, November 1864**

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Various

The Continental Monthly, Vol 6, No 5, November 1864 / Various —
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Various The Continental Monthly, Vol 6, No 5, November 1864 / Devoted To Literature And National Policy

THE PROGRESS OF LIBERTY IN THE UNITED STATES

There are three classes of persons in the loyal States of this Union who proclaim the present civil war unnecessary, and clamor for peace at any price: first, a multitude of people, so ignorant of the history of the country that they do not know what the conflict is about; secondly, a smaller class of better-informed citizens, who have no moral comprehension of the inevitable opposition of democracy and aristocracy, free society and slave society, and who believe sincerely that a permanent compromise or trade can be negotiated between these opposing forces in human affairs; thirdly, a clique of demagogues, who are trying to use these two classes of people to paralyze the Government, and force it into a surrender to the rebels on such terms as they choose to dictate: their separation from the United States or recall to their old power in a restored and reconstructed Union.

It will be my purpose, in this article, to show the complete fallacy of this notion, by presenting the facts concerning the progress of the different portions of our country in the American idea of liberty during the years preceding this war. The census of 1860, if honestly studied, must convince any unprejudiced man, at home or abroad, that the Slave Power deliberately brought this war upon the United States, to save itself from destruction by the irresistible and powerful growth of free society in the Union. This war had the same origin and necessity of every great conflict between the people and the aristocracy since the world began.

Every war of this kind in history has been the result of the advancement of the people in liberty. Now the people have inaugurated the conflict against the aristocracy, either in the interest of self-government, or an imperial rule which should virtually rest upon their suffrage. Now the aristocracy has risen upon the people, who were becoming too strong and free, to conquer and govern them through republican or monarchical forms of society. There has always been an irrepressible conflict between aristocracy and democracy; in times of peace carried on by all the agencies of popular advancement; but in every nation finally bursting into civil war. And every such war, however slow its progress, or uncertain its immediate consequence, has finally left the mass of the people nearer liberty than it found them.

The northern Grecian states represented the cause of the people; and the oriental empires the cause of the few. These little states grew so rapidly that the despots of Asia became alarmed, and organized gigantic expeditions to destroy them. At Marathon and Salamis, the people's cause met and drove back the mighty invasion; and two hundred years later, under the lead of Alexander, dissolved every Asiatic empire, from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates, to its original elements.

Julius Cæsar destroyed the power of the old Roman aristocracy in the interest of the people of the Roman empire. Under the name of 'The Republic,' that patrician class had oppressed the people of Rome and her provinces for years as never was people oppressed before. After fifty years of civil war, Julius and Augustus Cæsar organized the masses of this world-wide empire, and established a government under which the aristocracy was fearfully worried, but which administered such, justice to the world as had never before been possible.

The religious wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which involved the whole of Europe for eighty years, were begun by the civil and religious aristocracy of Europe to crush the

progress of religious and civil liberty among the people. These wars continued until religious freedom was established in Germany, Holland, and Great Britain, and those seeds of political liberty sown that afterward sprang up in the American republic.

The English civil wars of the seventeenth century were begun by the king and great nobles to suppress the rising power of the commons, and continued till constitutional liberty was practically secured to all the subjects of the British empire.

The French Revolution was the revolt of the people of France against one of the most cruel and tyrannical aristocracies that ever reigned; and continued, with brief interruptions, till the people of both France and Italy had vindicated the right to choose their emperors by popular suffrage.

During the half century between the years 1775 and 1825, every people in North America had thrown off the power of a foreign aristocracy by war, and established a republican form of government, except the Canadas, which secured the same practical results by more peaceful methods.

The historian perceives that each of these great wars was an inevitable condition of liberty for the people, and has exalted their condition. In all these struggles there were the same kinds of opponents to the war: the ignorant, who knew nothing about it; the morally indifferent, who could not see why freemen and tyrants could not agree to live together in amity; and the demagogues, who were willing to ruin the country to exalt themselves. But we now understand that only through these red gates of war could the peoples of the world have marched up to their present enjoyment of liberty; that each naming portal is a triumphal arch, on which is inscribed some great conquest for mankind.

The present civil war in the United States is the last frantic attempt of this dying feudal aristocracy to save itself from inevitable dissolution. The election of Mr. Lincoln as President of the United States, in 1860, by the vote of every Free State, was the announcement to the world that the people of the United States had finally and decisively conquered the feudal aristocracy of the republic after a civil contest of eighty years. With no weapons but those placed in their hands by the Constitution of the United States, the freemen of the republic had practically put this great slave aristocracy under their feet forever. That portion of the Union which was controlled by the will of the whole people had become so decidedly superior in every attribute of power and civilization, that the slave aristocracy despaired of further peaceful resistance to the march of liberty through the land. Like every other aristocracy that has lived, it drew the sword on the people, either to subdue the whole country, or carry off a portion of it, to be governed in the interests of an oligarchy.

This great people was not plunged into civil war by unfriendly talking, or by the unfriendly legislation of the Northern people, or by the accidental election of Abraham Lincoln as President. Nations do not go to war for hard words or trifling acts of unfriendliness or accidental political changes; although these may be the ostensible causes of war—the sparks that finally explode the magazine. There was a real cause for this rebellion—the *peaceful, constitutional triumph of the people over the aristocracy of the republic, after a struggle of eighty years*. If ever a great oligarchy had good reason to fight, it was the Slave Power in 1860. It found itself defeated and condemned to a secondary position in the republic, with the assurance that its death was only a question of time. It is always a good cause of war to an aristocracy that its power is abridged; for an aristocracy cares only for itself, and honestly regards its own supremacy as the chief interest on earth. This Slave Power has only done what every such power has done since the foundation of the world. It has drawn the sword against the inevitable progress of mankind, and will be conquered by mankind. It is waging this terrible war, not against Northern Abolitionists, or the present Administration, *but against the United States census tables of 1860*; against the mighty realities of the progress of free society in the republic, which have startled us all; but with which no class of men were so well acquainted as Mr. Jefferson Davis and his associates in rebellion.

There has always been a conflict in our country between this old slave aristocracy and the people. The first great victory of the people was in the war of the Revolution. That war was inaugurated and forced upon the country by the masses of the people of the New England and Middle

States. The aristocracy of the South, with their associates in the North, resisted the movement to separate the people from the crown of Great Britain, till resistance was impossible, and then came in, to some extent, to lead the movement and appropriate the rewards of success. But the free people of the North brought on and sustained the war. Massachusetts was then the fourth province in population; but she sent eight thousand more soldiers to the field during those bloody eight years than all the Southern States united. Virginia was then the empire State of the Union, and Rhode Island the least; but great, aristocratic Virginia furnished only seven hundred more soldiers than little, democratic Rhode Island. New England furnished more than half the troops raised during the Revolution; and the great centres of aristocracy in the Middle and Southern States were the stronghold of Toryism during the war. Indeed, a glance at the map of the Eastern and Middle States reveals the fact that the headquarters of the 'peace party' in the Revolutionary and the present war are in precisely the same localities. The 'Copperhead' districts of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania are the old Tory districts of the Revolution. The Tories of that day, with the mass of the Southern aristocracy, tried to 'stop the war' which was to lay the foundations of the freedom of all men. The Tories of to-day are engaged in the same infamous enterprise, and their fate will be the same.

Had the Slave Power been united in 1776, we should never have gained our independence. But it was divided. Every State was nominally a Slave State; but slaveholders were divided into two classes. The first was led by Washington, Jefferson, Madison, and other illustrious aristocrats, North and South; and, like the Liberal lords of Great Britain, threw their influence on the side of the people. This party, very strong in Virginia, very weak in the Carolinas, dragged the South through the war by the hair of its head; and compelled it to come into the Union. It also resolved to abolish the Slave Power, and succeeded in consecrating the whole Northwestern territory to freedom as early as 1790. The opposition party had its headquarters at Charleston, was treasonable or luke-warm during the war, and refused to come into the Union without guarantees for slavery.

The result of the whole struggle was, that the people of the thirteen colonies, with the help of a portion of their aristocracy, severed the country from Great Britain, and established a Government by which they, the people, believed themselves able, in time, to control the whole Union, and secure personal liberty in every State. For 'the compromises of the Constitution' mean just this: that our National Government was a great arena on which aristocracy and democracy could have a free fight. If the aristocracy beat, that Government would be made as despotic as South Carolina; if the democracy triumphed, it would become as free as Massachusetts. That was what the people had never before achieved: *a free field to work for a Christian democracy*. God bless the sturdy people of New England and the Middle States for this! God bless George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, John Marshall and the liberal gentlemen of the Old Dominion, for helping the people do it. They did not win the victory, as many have supposed; but they bravely helped to lead the people of the Free States to this great military and civil achievement. Virginia was richly paid for the service of her aristocracy. But history tells us who did the work, and how nobly it was done.

The republic was now established, with a Constitution which might be made to uphold a democratic or an aristocratic government, as either party should triumph. The Slave Power, forced half reluctantly into the Union, now began to conspire to rule it for its own uses. All that was necessary, it thought, was to unite the aristocracy against the people. And this work was at once well begun. The first census was taken in 1790, and the last in 1860. This period divides itself, historically, into two portions. The thirty years from 1780 may be regarded as the period of the *consolidation of the Slave Power, and its first distinct appearance as a great sectional aristocracy in 1820, in the struggle that resulted in the 'Missouri Compromise.'* The forty years succeeding 1820 may be called the period of the *consolidation of freedom to resist this assault, and the final triumph of democracy in 1860, by the election of a President.*

The first thirty years was a period of incessant activity by the slave aristocracy. It incurred a nominal loss in the abolition of slavery in eight Eastern and Middle States, and the consecration of

the great Northwestern territory to freedom; out of which three great Free States had already been carved; making, in 1820, eleven Free States. But it had gained by the concentration of its power below the line of the Ohio and Pennsylvania boundary, the division of the territory belonging to the Carolinas, and the Louisiana purchase; whereby it had gained five new Slave States; making the number of Slave States equal to the Free—eleven. It put forward the liberal aristocracy of Virginia to occupy the Presidential chair during thirty-two of the thirty-six years between 1789 and 1825; thus compelling Virginia and Maryland to a firm alliance with itself. It had manoeuvred the country through a great political struggle and a foreign war, both of which were chiefly engineered to secure the consolidation of the slave aristocracy. In 1820 its power was extended in eleven States, containing four hundred and twenty-four thousand square miles, with one hundred and seventy-nine thousand square miles of territory sure to come in as Slave States; and the remainder of the Louisiana purchase not secure to liberty. It had a white population only seven hundred thousand less, while its white and black population was a million more than all the Free States.

The North was barely half as large in area of States: two hundred and seventy thousand square miles, with only one hundred thousand square miles in reserve of the territory dedicated to liberty. With an equality of representation in the Senate of the United States, and a firm hold of all the branches of the Government, the prospect of the oligarchy for success was brilliant. In every nation the aristocracy first gets possession, organizes first, and proceeds deliberately to seize and administer the government. The people are always unsuspecting, slow, late in organizing, and seem to blunder into success or be led to it by a Providence higher than themselves. In this Government the slave aristocracy first consolidated, and in 1820 appeared boldly on the arena, claiming the superiority, and threatening ruin to the republic in the event of the failure of their plans. It had managed so well that there was now no division in its ranks, and for the last forty years has moved forward in solid column to repeated assaults on liberty.

The people, as usual, did not suspect the existence of this concentrated power till 1820. They made a brave militia fight then against the aristocracy, and compelled it to acknowledge a drawn battle by the admission of Maine to balance Missouri, and the establishment of a line of compromise, which would leave all territory north of 36° 30' consecrated to freedom. The Slave Power submitted with anger, intending to break the bargain as soon as it was strong enough, and continued on its relentless struggle for power. It determined to gain possession of the Senate of the United States; make it a house of nobles; control through it the foreign policy, the Executive, and the Supreme Court; and, with this advantage, reckoned it could always manage the House of Representatives and govern the nation. The key to all the political policy of the Slave Power through these last forty years is this endeavor to capture the Senate of the United States, and hold it, by bringing in a superior *number* of Slave States. So well did it play this card that, till 1850, it maintained an equality of senatorial representation, and, by the help of Northern allies and the superior political dexterity of the aristocracy, controlled our foreign policy; kept its own representatives in all the great courts of Europe; made peace or war at will; managed the Executive through a veto on his appointments; and endeavored to fill the Supreme Court with men in favor of its policy, while the House of Representatives never was able to pass a measure without its consent. Under the past forty years' reign of the Slave Power, the Senate of the United States has been a greater farce in the republic than the crown and House of Lords in the British empire. Indeed, so well did this aristocracy play its part, *that it was supposed by the whole world to be the American Government*; and the news that the people of the United States had refused, in 1860, to register its behests, was received abroad with the same astonishment and indignation as if there had been a revolt of the subjects of any European nation against their anointed rulers.

But spite of these great advantages at the outset—spite of its incredible political activity and admirable concentration, the slave aristocracy was finally defeated by the people. How this was done is the most interesting narrative in modern history. Never has the intrinsic superiority of a democratic over an aristocratic order of society been so magnificently vindicated as during the last forty years of

our national career. During that period the free portion of this Union has grown to an overwhelming superiority over the slave portion, and compelled the slaveholders to draw the sword to save themselves from material and providential destruction.

This period of forty years may be regarded as that of the *consolidation of the people*. The first thirty years of it was the era of their *industrial and social consolidation*; the last ten years has been the period of their *political union against the Slave Power*.

An aristocracy always exhibits the uttermost pitch of human policy in its career, and amazes and outwits society by its marvellous display of executive ability. But the people are always moved by great supernatural forces that are beyond their comprehension, often disowned or scorned by them, but which mould their destiny and lead them to a victory spite of themselves. The people always grow without conscious plan or method, and rarely know their own strength. But there are always a few great men who represent their destiny, and, often against their will, direct them in the path to liberty. History will record the names of three great men who, during the last forty years, have been the most notable figures in this consolidation of the people in this republic; three men that the implacable hatred of the Slave Power has singled out from all other Northern men as special objects of infamy; men who represent the industrial, moral, and political phases of the people's growth to supremacy. Each came when he was wanted, and faithfully did his work; and their history is the chronicle of this advance of liberty in the republic.

The first of these men was De Witt Clinton, of New York. No Northern man so early discovered the deep game of the Slave Power as he. He was the ablest statesman of the North in the days when the aristocracy of the South was just effecting its consolidation. He was a prominent candidate for the Presidency, and was scornfully put down by the power that ruled at Richmond. The slaveholders knew him for their clear-headed enemy, and drove him out of the arena of national politics. Never was political defeat so auspicious. Cured of the political ambition of his youth, Mr. Clinton turned the energies of his massive genius to the *industrial consolidation of the North*. He saw that all future political triumph of liberty must rest on the triumph of free labor. He anticipated the coming greatness of the Northwest, and boldly devoted his life to the inauguration of that system of internal improvements which has made the Northern States the mighty, free industrial empire it now is. Within the period of ten years lying nearest 1820, the people, under the lead of Clinton and his associates, had brought into active operation the three great agencies of free labor—the steamer, the canal, the railroad; while our manufacturing industry dates from the same period.

This was the providential movement of a great people, organizing a method of labor which should overthrow the American aristocracy. Of course the people did not know what all this meant; thousands of the men who were foremost in organizing Northern industry did not suspect the end; but De Witt Clinton knew. The wisecracks of the city of New York nicknamed his canal 'Clinton's Ditch.' It was the first ditch in that series of continental 'parallels' by which the people of the North have approached the citadel of the Slave Power. They have dug in those vast intrenchments for forty years, to such purpose that in 1860 the great guns of free labor commanded every plantation in the Union. Pardon them, then, O lieutenant-generals of the slavery forces, if they still think well of the spade that has dug their highway to power. The Northern spade is a slow machine—but it will yet shovel the slave aristocracy into the Gulf of Mexico as sure as God lives!

Glance over this field of industrial and material growth in the free portion of the Union, as it appeared in 1860.

At that time the Free States had increased to nineteen, while the Slave States were fifteen, containing eight hundred and seventy-five thousand square miles. The people had nine hundred and fifty thousand square miles organized into free-labor States, with eight vast Territories, containing one million square miles, an area equal to twenty-four States as large as New York. In this vast extent of States and Territories, including two thirds the land of the Union, there were not a hundred slaves. *The Government holds all those States and Territories to-day.*

Look at the position and value of these possessions of freedom. In 1850 liberty secured the great State of California, and in 1860 the State of Kansas. These States insure the possession of the whole Pacific coast, the entire mineral wealth of the mountains, the Indian Territory, and the vast spaces of Northwestern Texas to freedom, and open Mexico to Northern occupation. In the East, freedom had already secured the best harbors for commerce; in the Northwest, the granary of the world; the inexhaustible mineral wealth of Lake Superior, and the navigation of thousands of miles upon the great inland seas that separate the republic from the Canadas. From the Northern Atlantic and the Pacific it commanded the trade of Europe and Asia. This region embraces the best climates of the continent for the habitation of a vigorous race of men, and contains all the elements of imperial power.

Freedom had secured, in 1860, a population of twenty millions, while the Slave Power had reached but twelve millions, one third of whom were slaves. From 1850 to 1860 the Union *gained* almost as much in population as the entire census of 1820; and of that gain the North secured forty-one and the South but twenty-seven per cent. The slave population increased but twenty-three per cent. At this rate of increase the year 1900 will see a population of one hundred millions in the Union, of whom nine millions will be negroes, and a vast majority of the white population located in territory now free. Between 1820 and 1860 five million emigrants reënforced the Union, of which the North received the greater portion. Between the war of 1814 and 1860, Great Britain and Ireland sent to us more people than inhabited the thirteen States that formed the Union, and of this immigrant population there was an excess of nine hundred and fifty thousand *men*—a nation poured in upon the great, free North, to reënforce the people.

Already was this increase of free population telling upon slave labor in Slave States. Even in the Gulf cities Sambo was fast receding before the brawny arms of Hans and Patrick. Northwestern Texan was becoming a new Germany. Western Virginia, Maryland, Missouri, and Delaware were rapidly losing in slave labor; while along the border had grown up a line of ten cities in Slave States, containing six hundred thousand people, of whom less than ten thousand were slaves. This line of cities, from Wilmington Delaware, to St. Louis, Missouri, was becoming a great cordon of free-labor citadels; supported in the rear by another line of Free Border-State cities, stretching from Philadelphia to Leavenworth, containing nine hundred thousand; thus *massing a free population of one million five hundred thousand in border cities that overlooked the land of despotism.*

Then consider the growth of free agriculture. In 1860 the South had a cotton and rice crop as her exclusive possession. Already the Northwest was encroaching upon her sugar cultivation. Against her agriculture, mainly supported by one great staple, which can also be cultivated all round the globe, the free North could oppose every variety of crop; several of greater value than the boasted cotton. In all the grains, in cattle and the products of the dairy, in hay, in fruits; in the superior cultivation of land; in the vastly superior value of land; in agricultural machinery, probably representing a labor force equal to all the slaves—the superiority of freedom was too evident for discussion. *The value of agricultural machinery in the Free States had trebled between 1850 and 1860.* The Homestead Law was the fit result of this vast advance of free labor, and has sealed the destiny of every present and future Territory of the Union.

Then contemplate the vast expansion of manufacturing industry, of which nine tenths belong to the Free States. *In ten years from 1850 to 1860, this branch of labor had increased eighty-six per cent.,* reaching the enormous sum of \$2,000,000,000; \$60 for every inhabitant of the Union. A million and a half of people were engaged as operatives therein, supporting nearly five millions—one sixth the whole population of the Union; while fully one third our population may be said to directly and indirectly live by manufactures.

The increase of iron manufactures in ten years was forty-four per cent.; the coal mines reached a treble yield in ten years; \$10,000,000, of clothing were produced in 1860. The lumber trade had increased sixty-four percent, in ten years, reaching \$100,000,000. Flouring mills showed sixty-five

per cent, increase, reaching \$225,000,000; spirits, \$24,000,000; cotton manufactures had increased seventy-six per cent, in ten years, reaching \$115,000,000; woollens had increased sixty-seven per cent.; boots and shoes walked up to \$76,000,000, and leather to \$63,000,000. The fishermen of New England increased mightily. The gold of California, copper of the Northwest, the salt of New York and Michigan had reached colossal proportions. Whoever studies the manufacturing statistics of the North for the past ten years will be at no loss to know why the manufacturers of Great Britain are willing to sever the Slave States from the Union, to gain a customer it was thus supplying in 1860.

Now add to this array of agriculture, manufactures, extent of territory, and excess of population, the superiority of the Free States in commerce. The tonnage of the Union was twenty-six millions in 1860, the fourth of which was the growth of the ten years previous. Out of the one thousand and seventy-one ships built in 1860, the 'nation' of South Carolina produced one steamer and one schooner! Contemplate the money power of the city of New York, the vast capital invested in trade, in banks, insurance, and the like, in the North. The slave aristocracy was becoming imprisoned in a vast web of financial dependence—a web that war and wholesale repudiation of debts alone could break through.

In 1860 there were in the Union 30,— 600 miles of railroad, costing \$1,134,— 452,909, four times the extent of 1850. In 1850 only one line of railroad connected the Atlantic with the Mississippi. Now, of the eight great railroad and canal routes connecting the sea coast with this valley, six run through the Free States; transportation on these avenues costs but one tenth the old methods. Governor Letcher declares the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad has 'abolitionized' Northern and Western Virginia, and the Southern rebellion has been especially savage on railroads. Whoever would understand one secret of the consolidation of the people should study the railroad map of the Northern States, and contrast it with the South. It was a fine tribute to the value of the railroad that the first use the people made of their new political supremacy in 1860 was to pass the bill for connecting the Atlantic and Pacific by the iron rail and the telegraphic wire.

This vast advancement in free labor, from 1820 to 1850, was fitly closed in 1850 by the annexation of California to the roll of the Free States, securing to liberty the gold mines and the Pacific coast. It is impossible to comprehend all the consequences of this step. It was the decisive industrial triumph of the people over the slave aristocracy. The Slave Power went mad over the defeat, *and for the last ten years has virtually abandoned the rivalry of industries, and turned to violence*, breaking of compromises, forcible seizure of the ballot box, repudiation of debts, stealing of arms, and finally cruel war, as if lying and robbing, in the long run, could upset free and honest industry. After the loss of California and the Pacific coast, the struggle for the Territories was but a, preliminary skirmish of the war for the conquest and desolation of the Union. The people had *waged the battle of liberty with the gigantic agencies of material prosperity for forty years, and the aristocracy was completely in their power.*

For this material superiority of the free-labor States inevitably inured to the advantage of liberty. In vain did every new Free State, year after year, vote with the Slave Power; in vain did every great railroad and manufacturing corporation of the North obey the political behests of the lords of the plantations; in vain was the mercantile aristocracy of all the great cities the fast friend of the slave aristocracy; and vainly did almost the entire immigrant population fall politically into its control. All this was as nothing *against the irresistible natural tendency of free labor*. The Irishman who voted against the negro was breaking his chain with every blow of his pick. The Wall-street banker, the great railroad king, the cotton manufacturer, who railed against abolitionism like mad, were condemning the slave aristocracy every day they lived. There is a divine law by which the work of freemen shall root out the work of slaves; and no law enacted by the will of Northern doughfaces could repeal this statute of nature. These Northern friends of the aristocracy supposed themselves to be helping their ambitious allies by their political support. But the slaveholders knew how fallacious was this aid. They saw that the North was gaining a huge superiority to the South; that the people

were slowly consolidating; that when the free-labour interest did finally concentrate, it would carry every Northern interest with it, and, when the pinch came, no Northern party or statesman could or would help them do their will. They carefully sifted all offers of aid from such quarters, and having used every Northern interest and institution and party till it was squeezed dry of all its black blood, they turned their backs haughtily on the white sections of the Union, plundered friend and foe alike, and flew into civil war, out of spite and rage at the census of 1860; in other words, *declared war against the providence of God as manifested in the progress of free society*. They have fought well; at first, perhaps, better than we; but when General Lee 'flanks' the industrial decrees of the Almighty, and Stuart 'cuts the communications' between free labor and imperial power, they will destroy this republic—and not till then.

But was this great material gain of the people to be accompanied by a corresponding spiritual advancement? *Was man to become the chief object of reverence in this wonderfully expanding industrial empire?* If not, all this progress was deceptive, and nobody could predict how soon our very superiority should be turned to the advantage of that aristocracy which had perverted so many things in the republic.

It could not be denied that the Free States were making wonderful strides, during these forty years, in mental cultivation and power. The free industry of the North was an education to the people, and nowhere has so much popular intelligence been carried into the business of life as here. This period also witnessed the organization of the free school everywhere outside of New England, its home; the daily press, the public lecture, the creation of an American literature, all Northern; the growth of all institutions of learning and means of intellectual and artistic cultivation unparalleled in any other age or land. No well-informed person could also deny the astonishing progress in furnishing the means of religious instruction, the multiplication of churches, great ecclesiastical organizations, and philanthropic leagues. Notwithstanding the apparent absorption of the North in its material prosperity, no people ever was so busy in furnishing itself with the means of spiritual improvement; and though a population of several millions of ignorant and superstitious foreigners was thrown in upon it during these eventful years, it came out at the end the most intelligent people, the best provided with the apparatus of religion, that was ever known.

But there was one element yet wanting to assure the right usage of all this wealth of material, intellectual, and ecclesiastical power. This was what the slaveholding aristocracy saw at once to be the fatal omen for their cause, and nicknamed 'Abolitionism.' *Abolitionism, as recognized by the Slave Power, is nothing more nor less than the religious reverence for man and his natural rights.* This moral respect for the nature and rights of all men has always encountered the peculiar scorn of aristocracies, and no men have been so bitterly persecuted in history as those who represented the religious opposition to despotism. The Hebrew aristocracy in old Palestine called this sentiment 'atheism' in Jesus Christ, and crucified Him. The pagan aristocracy called it a 'devilish superstition' in the early Christians, and slaughtered them like cattle. The priestly and civil absolutism of the sixteenth century called it 'fanaticism' in the Dutch and German reformers, and fought it eighty years with fire and rack and sword. The church and crown nicknamed it 'Puritanism,' and persecuted it till it turned and cut off the head of Charles the First, and secured religious liberty. The slave aristocracy stigmatized it 'Abolitionism,' and let loose upon it every infernal agency in its power.

One great man, yet alive, but not yet recognized as he will be, was the representative of this religious reverence for the rights of man. Lloyd Garrison has been, for the last twenty-five years, the best-hated man in these Northern States, not because he failed to see just how a Union of Free and Slave States could endure; not because of any visionary theory of political action or the structure of society he cherished; but, strangely enough, because *he stood-up for man and his divine right to freedom*. This was what the aristocracy hated in him, and this is what, with inexpressible rage, it saw gaining in the North. It truly said that our education, our arts, our literature, our press, our churches, our benevolent organizations, our families, all that was best in Northern society, even our politics,

were being consolidated by this 'fanaticism,' Puritanism, 'Abolitionism'—otherwise, by *reverence for man and his right to freedom*.

It grew, however, almost as fast as the material power of the North—this moral conviction of the divine right of man to liberty; grew so fast, that in 1860, South Carolina glanced over the November election returns, saw the name of Abraham Lincoln at the head, shrieked, '*The North is abolitionized!*' and rushed out of the Union, with ten other Slave States at her heels, while four more were held back by the strong arm of the national power. The North is not yet 'abolitionized,' but every volley fired at liberty by the Slave Power these last three years, has killed a lover of slavery, and made an Abolitionist; as the juggler fires his pistol at your old black hat, and, when the smoke clears up, a white dove flutters in its place. If the Slave Power shoots at us long enough, we shall all become Abolitionists, and all learn to love our fellow man and protect him in the enjoyment of every right given him by God!

Thus had the Free States, the people's part of the Union, gone up steadily to overshadowing material, intellectual, moral power. But up to 1850 this mighty growth had got no fit expression in State or national politics. All the great parties had mildly tried to remonstrate with the slave aristocracy, but quickly recoiled as from the mouth of a furnace. A few attempts had been made to organize a party for freedom, but nothing could gain foothold at Washington. A few noble men had lifted their voices against the rampant tyranny of the slaveholders: chief among these was John Quincy Adams, the John the Baptist crying in the desert of American partisan politics the coming of the kingdom of Heaven! But when the people had come up to a consciousness of their consolidated power, and the reverence for human right was changing and polarizing every Northern institution—in the fierce struggle that ushered in and succeeded the admission of California, between 1848 and 1856—this Northern superiority culminated in a great political movement against slavery. *This movement assumed a double form—positive, in the assertion that the Slave Power should be arrested; negative, in the assertion that the people should have their own way with it.* The Republican party said: *The slave aristocracy shall go no farther.* The 'Popular Sovereignty' party, or Douglas Democracy, said: *The people shall do what they choose about this matter.* Now the people were already the superior power in the republic, and were rapidly growing to hate the Slave Power; so the slaveholders, saw that the Northern Democracy, with their war cry of *popular sovereignty*, might in time be just as dangerous to them as their more open enemies. They repudiated both forms of Northern politics, and tied the executive, under James Buchanan, and the Supreme Court, under Judge Taney, to their dogma: *The right of the aristocracy is supreme. Slavery, not liberty, is the law of the republic.*

The great leaders of these Northern parties were Stephen H. Douglas and William H. Seward. Mr. Douglas was the best practical politician, popular debater, and magnetizer of the masses, the North has yet produced. *He was the representative of the blind power of the North*, and stood up all his life, in his better hours, for the right of the people to make the republic what they would. But the representative statesman of the era is the Secretary of State. The whole career of Mr. Seward is so interwoven with the history of the political consolidation of the people against the Slave Power, that the two must be studied together to be understood. Nowhere so clearly and eloquently as in the pages of this great philosophical statesman can be read the rapid growth of that political movement that in twelve years captured every Free State, placed a President in the chair, and then, with a splendid generosity, invited the whole loyal people to unite in a party of the Union, *knowing that henceforth the Union meant the people and liberty against the aristocracy and slavery.* And only in the light of this view can the course of this man and his great seeming opponent, but real associate, be fitly displayed. *Douglas had taught the people of the North that their will should be the law of the republic. Seward had told them that will should be in accordance with the 'higher law' of justice and freedom.* Like men fighting in the dark, they supposed themselves each other's enemies, while they were only commanders of the front and rear of the army of the people. Both appeared on the national arena in the struggle of 1850, and soon strode to the first place. The Slave Power repudiated Seward and his

'higher law' of justice and liberty at once. They tolerated Douglas and his 'popular sovereignty' ten years longer, when they found it even a more dangerous heresy, and threw him overboard.

In the election of 1860 there were but two parties—the two wings of the people's army, under the patriots Lincoln and Douglas; the two wings of the slave host, under the traitors Breckinridge and Bell. Of course the people triumphed. Had Douglas been elected instead of Lincoln, the Slave Power would not have stayed in the Union one hour longer. *It was not Lincoln, but the political supremacy of the people they resisted.* The Free States had at last consolidated, never to recede, and that was enough. Henceforth no party could live in the North that espoused the cause of this rebel aristocracy. Whoever was Governor or President, Democrat, Republican, Union, what not, the people's party was henceforth supreme, and the aristocracy, with all its works of darkness, was second best.

The political victory of 1860 was virtually complete. For the first time in eighty years had the people concentrated against the Slave Power. The executive was gained, placing the army, navy, appointments, and patronage in the hands of the President, the people's representative by birth and choice. The North had a majority of eight in the Senate and sixty-five in the House of Representatives, insuring a control of the foreign policy and the financial affairs of the republic; while the Supreme Court, the last bulwark of despotism, could be reconstructed in the interest of the Constitution. It is true the people did not appreciate the magnitude of the victory, or realize what it implied. They would probably have made no special use of it at once, and the aristocracy might have outwitted them again, as they had for three quarters of a century past. But the slaveholders knew that now was just the time to strike. If they waited till the people understood themselves better, and learned how to administer the Government for liberty, it would be too late. They still had possession of the executive, with all the departments, the Supreme Court, army, and navy, for four precious months. This was improved in inflicting as much damage on the Government as possible, and organizing a confederacy of revolted States. The people did not believe they would fight, and offered them various compromises, *everything except the thing they desired—unlimited power to control the republic.* The aristocracy knew that no compromises would do them good which proposed anything less than a reconstruction of the Union which would insure their perpetual supremacy. They even doubted if this could be effectually accomplished in a peaceful way. The people must first be subdued by arms, their Union destroyed, and brought to the verge of anarchy by this mighty power, backed by the whole despotism of Europe; then might they be compelled to accept such terms as it chose to dictate. It waited no longer than was necessary to complete its preparations, and opened its guns in Charleston harbor. When the smoke of that cannonade drifted away, the people beheld with consternation the Slave Powers arrayed in arms, from Baltimore and St. Louis to New Orleans and the Rio Grande, advancing to seize their capital and overthrow the republic.

Having conquered the aristocracy by its industry, education, religion, and politics—driven it from every position on the great field of American society in an era of peace—the people slowly awoke to the conviction that they must now conquer it on the field of arms. They were slow to come to that conviction. Their ablest leaders were not war-statesmen, and did not comprehend at once the full meaning of the war. They called it a 'conspiracy,' a 'rebellion,' an 'insurrection,' a 'summer madness,' anything but what it was—*the American slave aristocracy in arms to subdue the people of the United States with every other aristocracy on earth wishing it success.* But the people did not refuse the challenge. In April, 1861, they rushed to the capital, saved their Government from immediate capture or dispersion, and then began to prepare, after their way, for—they hardly knew what—to suppress a riot or wage a civil war.

In every such conflict as this the aristocracy has a great advantage, especially if it can choose its own time to begin the war. Never was an oligarchy more favored in its preparations than ours. Since 1820 it had contemplated and prepared for this very hour. It had almost unlimited control over fifteen States of the Union. Society was constructed in all these States on a military basis, the laboring class being held in place by the power of the sword. An aristocracy is always preceded by

military ambition; for all subordinate orders of its people have acquired the habit of respect for rank and implicit obedience to superiors, so essential to success in war. When the war broke out, the Slave Power was ready. Its arms and ammunition and forts were stolen; its military organizations had been perfected in secret societies; its generals were selected—its president perhaps the best general of all; its military surveys were made, every Southern State mapped, and every strategical point marked; its subordinate officers, in which the real efficiency of an army consists, had been educated in military schools kept by such teachers as Hill and Stonewall Jackson. It had a full crop of cotton as a basis for finance. Its government was practically such a despotism as does not exist in the world. At the sound of the first gun in Charleston, the aristocracy sprang to arms; in a fortnight every strategical point in fifteen States was practically in its possession, and Washington tottered to its fall.

The people, as the people always are, were unprepared for war. Their entire energies had been concentrated for forty years in organizing the gigantic victory of peace which they had just achieved. When they woke up to the idea that there was yet another battle to be fought before the aristocracy would subside, they *began to learn the art of war*. And never did the people begin a great war so unprepared. The people of Europe have always had military traditions and cultivation to fall back upon in their civil wars. The North had no military traditions later than the Revolution, for no war since that day had really called forth their hearty efforts. Three generations of peace had destroyed even respect for war as an employment fit for civilized men. There were not ten thousand trained soldiers in all the nineteen States in April, 1861. There were not good arms to furnish fifty thousand troops in the possession of the National or loyal State Governments. Most of the ablest military men of the North had left the army, and were engaged in peaceful occupations. Halleck was in the law; McClellan, Burnside, Banks, on the railroad; Mitchel and Sigel teaching schoolboys; Hooker, Kearny, McCall, Dix, retired gentlemen; Fremont digging gold; Rosecrans manufacturing oil, and Grant in a tanyard; and so on to the end of the chapter; while Scott, the patriot hero, who was but once defeated in fifty years' service, was passing over into the helplessness of old age. Of course such a people did not realize the value of military education, and fell into the natural delusion that a multitude of men carrying guns and wearing blue coats is an army; and any 'smart man' can make a colonel in three months. There was not even a corporal in the Cabinet, and Mr. Lincoln's military exploits were confined to one campaign, in the war of 1812, and one challenge to fight a duel. There were not ten Northern men in Congress who could take a company into action. In short, we had the art of war to learn; even did not know it was necessary to learn to fight as to do anything else; especially to fight against an aristocracy that had been studying war for forty years.

For more than three years have the people of the United States waged this gigantic war thus precipitated upon them by their aristocracy to arrest the irresistible growth of modern society in the republic. Every year has been a period of great success, though our peaceful population, unacquainted with war, and often ignorant of the vast issues of this conflict, have often inclined to despondency. Of course the aristocracy fought best, at first, as every aristocracy in the world has done. With half our number of better disciplined troops, better commanded and manœuvred, and the great advantage of interior lines, supported by railroad communications, and possessing in Virginia, perhaps, the most defensible region in the Union, they held our Army of the Potomac at bay for two years; have thrice overrun Maryland and the Pennsylvania border, and yet hold their fortified capital; while every step of our victorious progress in the Southwest has been bitterly contested. Yet this war of martial forces has been strangely like the long, varied war of material, moral, and political forces of which it is the logical sequel.

The Union navy won the earliest laurels in the war. The navy has been the right arm of the people in all ages. The Athenian navy repelled the invasion of Greece by the Persian empire. Antony, Pompey, Cæsar, the people's leaders in Rome, built up their youthful power upon the sea. The Dutch and English navies saved religious and civil liberty in the sixteenth century; and all the constitutional Governments that now exist in Europe came out of the hold of a British man-of-war. The United

States, in 1812, extemporized a navy that gained us the freedom of the seas. And now the navy has led the way in the war for the freedom of the continent. The aristocracy felt, intuitively, the danger of this arm of defence, and discouraged, scattered, and almost annihilated our naval power before they entered upon the war. When we learn that our active navy, in April, 1861, consisted of one frigate, too large to sail over the bar of Charleston harbor, and one two-gun supply ship; and that in the three successive years it has shot up into a force of five hundred vessels; that our new ironclads and guns have revolutionized the art of naval warfare; that we have established the most effective blockade ever known along two thousand miles of dangerous coast; have captured Port Royal and New Orleans, aided in the opening of the Mississippi and all its dependencies which we now patrol, penetrated to the cotton fields of Alabama, occupied the inland waters of North Carolina and Virginia, seized every important rebel port and navy yard save four, and destroyed every war ship of the enemy that has ventured in range of our cannon, we are pronouncing a eulogy of which any people may be proud. One year more will swell this maritime power to a force amply sufficient to protect the coast of the whole republic from all assault of traitors at home or their friends abroad.

But the army of the Union has not been content to remain permanently behind the navy. Even in the first year of the conflict, when it was only a crowd of seventy-five thousand undisciplined militia, contending against a solid body of well-disciplined and commanded forces, it wrested two States from the foe, and baffled his intentions for the capture of all our great border cities. But since the opening of the campaign of 1802, the real beginning of war by the North, we have conquered from the aristocracy and now hold fast in Slave States an area of two hundred thousand square miles, inhabited by four millions of people—a district larger than France. Three years ago, every Slave State was virtually in the grasp of the rebels, and the Union was really put upon the defensive to protect freedom in the Free States and the national capital. Now, by a masterly series of campaigns in the West and Southwest, ranging from the Alleghanies to the Gulf, in which we have never lost a decisive battle, we have saved all the Territories of the United States, cut the 'Confederacy' in two equal parts, holding the western division at our mercy, opened the Mississippi and all its tributaries, and crowded the rebellion into the five States nearest the Atlantic coast. In the east we have fought a score of battles with the most formidable army ever marshalled on this continent, composed of the flower of the rebel soldiery led by their best generalship, and, spite of frequent repulses, have forced it from the Potomac and below the Rappahannock to the James, away from the smell of salt water, holding firmly every seaport from Washington to Wilmington, North Carolina, and a belt of land and water commanding the approach to the interior of every Atlantic State. The military force of the rebellion is rapidly being crowded into one army, not exceeding two hundred and fifty thousand men, against which the mighty power of the Union can be marshalled in overwhelming array. I know well enough that the decisive moment will really come when we confront that desperate and veteran host, on which the fate of aristocratic government upon this continent depends. But we shall then have a great army of veterans, marshalled under commanders fit to lead them in the name of liberty and the people.

It is not strange it has taken us three years to find who can fight among us. The Germans fought fifty years against religious despotism before they found Gustavus Adolphus to lead them to victory. The English fought ten years before Cromwell took command of his Ironsides. The French blundered ten years before the 'little corporal' led the army of the republic over the Alps to dethrone half the monarchs of Europe. The people had but one great general in the Revolutionary War. Until 1860 the aristocracy had furnished the only great American commander. But great generals have now appeared among the people; and if we fight stoutly and treat men fairly, our commander will appear when his army of veterans is ready.

The aristocracy at first moved armies faster than the people, for the same reason that the Tartars, the Cossacks, the Arabs, the Indians, and all semi-barbarians move more rapidly in war than a civilized people. A semi-barbarous oligarchy fights because it loves war; a civilized people fights to *establish civilization and peace*. The Southern army carries little along, lives on the food and wears

the dress of the semi-savage, and overruns vast spaces, leaving a smoking desolation and a ruined society. The Northern army moves slowly, because it carries American civilization in its knapsack and baggage wagons, organizes republican society as it goes, and prepares to hold for liberty all it has gained. The people's army has paved the way for liberty and a democratic order of society over two hundred thousand square miles, among four millions of people, in three years. New Orleans, Nashville, Memphis, Beaufort, Alexandria, every slave city in our possession, is being made over into a free city.

The army goes slow because it is only the people's pioneer to level the mountains and fill up the valleys, and construct the highway of liberty from the Potomac to the Rio Grande. The Secretary of State has well said: '*The war means the dissolution of slave society.*' It was entered into with the distinct understanding that it was the last expedient to save the negro oligarchy from ruin, and every day it goes on its thundering course it more emphatically pronounces its doom. The war for the Union is the people's final contest for liberty, a contest in which they will be victorious, as in the strife of industry, morals, and politics. The people, like John Brown's soul, are 'marching on' to dissolve the slave oligarchy and establish democracy. The people now possess three fourths the territory, population, and wealth of the republic. There are yet some six million black and white people in the South to rescue from their masters, who now use them against us. They are being prepared for Union with us by this war. The poor white man will be made better, more intelligent, more ambitious even, by service in the rebel army, and on the return of peace will become the small farmer of a free soil. The black men will be raised, in due time made freemen, and start as a free peasantry on a new career. A hundred thousand slaveholders, with their families, not more than one million of people in all, will hate the Union permanently. They will be defeated, we hope and believe, and disorganized as a social and political power, and the people rule in every State they have cursed by their ambition for the last fifty years.

We do not prophesy just when or how the people will triumph. The victory, we believe, will come; but whether all at once, or through temporary revulsions of purpose and alternate truce and war, whether finished by arms or yet cast again into the arena of politics, whether by occupying all this three millions of square miles of territory or gaining on despotism year by year, nobody knows. The Slave Power has not yet played its trump card. It has a hundred devilish resources yet to foil us. It may yet try to use the negroes it still holds against us by emancipation. It may yet drag us into a war with Europe, and Saratoga and Lake Erie and Plattsburg, and Long Island and Trenton and Bunker Hill, and Detroit and New Orleans may yet be fought over again. But we have seen how, for the last forty years, the people of the United States have strode on toward supremacy, led by a Power they did not always recognize, and sometimes scorned, but led to victory spite of themselves.

There has indeed been a Divine Intelligence guiding the destiny of our republic by the 'higher law' of the progress of free society toward a Christian democracy. We do not think the Peace Party will be able to abolish that 'higher law,' as certain of our politicians expect. We believe God Almighty is shaping a free and exalted civilized nation out of this republic, by a law of progress which we did not make and cannot repeal. We may postpone that nation by our folly and sins, but it must be made. Through labor and education, and religion and arts, and politics and war, 'it marches' on to supremacy—*the people's nation*. And when it is established it will be the controlling nation of this continent, one of the firmest powers on the earth, the terror of every aristocracy, and the joy and hope of every people on the round globe.

THE UNDIVINE COMEDY-A POLISH DRAMA

Dedicated to Mary

PART III

'Il fut administré, parceque le niais demandait un prêtre, puis pende à la satisfaction generale,' etc, etc.—Rapport du citoyen Gaillot, commissaire de la sixième chambre, an III., 5 prairial.

'The sacraments were administered to him, because the fool demanded a priest; he was hung to the general satisfaction.'—Report of citizen Gaillot, commissary of the sixth session, 3d year, 5th prairial.

A song! a new song!

Who will begin it? Who will end it?

Give me the Past, clad in steel, barbed with iron, floating in knightly plumes! With magic power I would invoke before you gothic towers and castellated turrets, bristling barbicans and mighty arches, baronial halls and clustered shafts; I would throw around you the giant shadows of vaulted domes and of revered cathedrals: but it may not be; all that is with the Past: the Past is never to return!

Speak, whosoever thou mayst be, and tell me in what thou believest! It is easier to lose thy life than to invent a faith; to awaken any belief in it!

Shame upon you all, great and small, for all things pursue their own course in defiance of your schemes! You may be mean and wretched, without hearts and without brains, yet the world hastens to its allotted destiny; it hurries you on whether you will or no, throws you in the dust, tosses you into wild confusion, or whirls you in resistless circles, which cease not until they grow into dances of Death! But the world rolls on—on; clouds and storms arise and vanish; then it grows slippery—new couples join the dance of Death—they totter—fall—lost in an abyss of blood—for it is slippery—blood—human blood is gushing everywhere, as if the path to peace led through a charnel house!

Behold the crowds of people thronging the gates of the cities, the hills, the valleys, and resting beneath the shadows of the trees! Tents are spread about, long boards are placed on the trunks of fallen trees or on pikes and sticks to serve as tables; they are covered with meat and drink, the full cups pass from hand to hand, and, as they touch the eager mouth, threats, oaths, and curses press forth from the hot lips. Faster and faster fly the cups from hand to hand, beaded, bubbling, glittering, always filling, striking, tinkling, ringing, as they circle among the millions: Hurrah! hurrah! Long live the cup of drunkenness and joy!

How fiercely they are agitated; how impatiently they wait! They murmur, they break into riotous noise!

Poor wretches! scarcely covered with their miserable rags, the seal of weary labors deeply stamped upon their sunburnt faces set with uncombed, bristling hair, the sweat starting from their rugged brows, their strong and horny hands armed with scythes, axes, hammers, hatchets, spades!

Look at that broad youth with the pickaxe; at the slight one with the sword. Here is one who holds aloft a glittering pike; another who brandishes a massive club with his brawny arm! There under the willows a boy crams cherries into his mouth with the one hand, and with the other punches the tree with a long, sharp awl. Women are also there, wives, mothers, daughters, poor and hungry as the men, Not a single trace of womanly beauty, of healthful freshness upon them; their hair is disordered and sprinkled with the dust of the highways, their tawny bodies scarcely covered with unsightly rags, their gloomy eyes seem fading into their sockets, only half open as if gluing together in very weariness: but they will soon be quickened, for the full cup flies from lip to lip, they quaff long draughts: Hurrah! hurrah! Long live the cup of drunkenness and joy!

Hark! a noise and rustling among the masses! Is it joy, or is it grief? Who can read the meaning of a thing so monstrously multiform!

A man arrives, mounts a table, harangues and sways the multitude. His voice drags and grates upon the ear, but hacks itself into sharp, strong words, clearly heard and easily understood; his gestures

are slow and light, accompanying his words as music, song. His brow is high and strong, his head is entirely bald; thought has uprooted its last hair. His skin is dull and tawny, the blood never tinges its dingy pallor, no emotion ever paints its secrets there, yellow wrinkles form and cross between the bones and muscles of his face, and a dark beard, like a black wreath, encircles it from temple to temple. He fastens a steady gaze upon his hearers, no doubt or hesitation ever clouds his clear, cold eye. When he raises his arm and stretches it out toward the people, they bow before him, as if to receive, prostrate, the blessing of a *great intellect*, not that of a *great heart*! Down, down with the great hearts! Away, away with old prejudices! Hurrah! hurrah! for the words of consolation! Hurrah for the license to murder!

This man is the idol of the people, their passion, the ruler of their souls, the stimulator of their enthusiasm. He promises them bread and money, and their cries rise like the rushing of a storm, widening and deepening in every direction: 'Long live Pancratius! Hurrah! Bread and money! Bread for us, our wives, our children! Hurrah! hurrah!'

At the feet of the speaker, leaning against the table on which he stands, rests his friend, companion, and disciple. His eye is dark and oriental, shadowed by long and gloomy lashes, his arms hang down, his limbs bend under him, his body is badly formed and distorted, his mouth is sensual and voluptuous, his expression is sharp and malicious, his fingers are laden with rings of gold—he joins the tumult, crying with a rough, hoarse voice: 'Long live Pancratius!' The speaker looks at him carelessly for a moment, and says: 'Citizen, Baptized, hand me a handkerchief!'

Meantime the uproar continues; the cries become more and more tumultuous: 'Bread for us! Bread! bread! Long live Pancratius! Death to the nobles! to the merchants! to the rich! Bread! bread! Bread and blood! Hurrah! hurrah!'

A tabernacle. Lamps. An open book lies on a table. Baptized Jews.

The Baptized. My wretched brethren; my revenge-seeking, beloved brethren! let us suck nourishment from the pages of the Talmud, as from the breast of our mother; it is the breast of life from which strength and honey flow for us, bitterness and poison for our enemies.

Chorus of Baptized Jews. Jehovah is our God, and ours alone; therefore has He scattered us in every land!

Like the coiled folds of an enormous serpent, He has wreathed us everywhere round and through the adorers of the cross; our lithe and subtle rings pass round and through our foolish, proud, unclean rulers.

Let us thrice spew them forth to destruction! Threefold curses light upon them!

The Baptized. Rejoice, my brethren! the Cross of our Great Enemy is already more than half hewn down; it is rotting to its fall; it is only standing on a root of blood: if it once plunge into the abyss it will never rise again. Hitherto the nobles have been its sole defence, but they are ours! ours!

Chorus of Baptized Jews. Our work, our long, long work of centuries, our sad, ardent, painful work is almost done!

Death to the nobles—let us thrice spew them forth to destruction! Threefold curses light upon them!

The Baptized. The might of Israel shall be built upon a liberty without law or order, upon a slaughter without end, upon the *pride* of the nobility, the *folly* of the masses. The nobles are almost destroyed; we must drive the few still left into the abyss of death, and scatter over their livid corpses the ruins of the shattered cross in which they trusted!

Chorus of Baptized Jews. The cross is now our holy symbol; the water of baptism has reunited us with men; the scorning repose upon the love of the scorned!

The freedom of men is our cry; the welfare of the people our aim; ha! ha! the eons of Christ trust the sons of Caiaphas!

Centuries ago our fathers tortured our Great Enemy to death; we will again torture him to death this very day—but He will never rise more from the grave which we prepare for Him!

The Baptized. Yet a little space, a little time, a few drops of poison, and the whole world will be our own, my brethren!

Chorus of Baptized Jews. Jehovah is the God of Israel, and of it alone.

Let us thrice spew forth the nations to destruction! Threefold curses light upon them!

Knocking is heard at the door.

The Baptized. Take up your work, brethren! And thou, Holy Book, away from sight—no unclean look shall soil thy spotless leaves! Who is there?

Hides the Talmud.

Voice (*without*). A friend. Open in the name of freedom.

The Baptized. Quick to your hammers and looms, my brethren!

He opens the door.

Enter Leonard.

Leonard. Well done, citizens. You watch, I see, and whet your swords for to-morrow.— (*Approaching one of the men.*) What are you making here in this corner?

One of the Baptized. Ropes.

Leonard. You are right, citizen, for he who falls not by iron must hang!

The Baptized. Citizen Leonard, is the thing really to come off to-morrow?

Leonard. He who thinks, feels, and acts with the most force among us, has sent me to you to appoint an interview. He will himself answer your question.

The Baptized. I go to meet him. Brethren, remain at work. Look well to them, citizen Yankel.

Exit with Leonard.

Chorus of Baptized Jews. Ye ropes and daggers, ye clubs and bills, the works of our hands, ye wilt go forth to destroy them!

The people will kill the nobles upon the plains, will hang them in the forests, and then, having none to defend them, we will kill and hang the people! The Despised will arise in their anger, will array themselves in the might of Jehovah: His Word is Redemption and Love for His people Israel, but scorn and fury for their enemies!

Let us thrice spew them forth to destruction: threefold curses fall upon them!

A tent. A profusion of flasks, cups, and flagons. Pancratius alone.

Pancratius. The mob howled in applause but a moment ago, shouted in loud hurrahs at every word I uttered. But is there a single man among them all who really understands my ideas, or who comprehends the end and aim of that path upon which we have entered, or where the reforms will terminate which have been so loudly inaugurated within the last hour? 'Ah! fervidum imitatorum pecus!'

Enter Leonard and the Baptized Jew.

Do you know Count Henry?

The Baptized. I know him well by sight, great citizen, but I am not personally acquainted with him. I remember once when I was approaching the Lord's Supper, he cried to me, '*Out of the way!*' and looked down upon me with the arrogant look peculiar to the nobles—for which I vowed him a rope in my soul.

Pancratius. Prepare to visit him early to-morrow morning, and announce to him that it is my wish to confer with him alone.

The Baptized. How many men will you send with me on this embassy? I do not think it would be safe to undertake it without a guard.

Pancratius. You must go alone, my name will be sufficient guard, and the gallows on which you hung the baron yesterday, your shield.

The Baptized. Woe is me!

Pancratius. Tell him I will visit him to-morrow night.

The Baptized. And if he should put me in chains or order me to be hung?

Pancratius. You would die a martyr for the freedom of the people!

The Baptized. I will sacrifice all for the freedom of the people.—(*Aside.*) Woe is me!—(*Aloud.*) Good night, citizen.

Exit the Baptized.

Leonard. Pancratius, why this delay, these half measures, these contracts, this strange interview? When I swore to honor and obey you, it was because I believed you to be a hero of extremes, an eagle flying even in the face of the sun directly to its aim; a brave man ready to venture all upon the cast of a die.

Pancratius. Silence, child!

Leonard. Everything is ready; the baptized Jews have forged arms and woven ropes; the masses clamor for immediate orders. Speak but the word now, and the electric sparks will fly, the millions flash into forked lightnings, kindle into flame, and consume our enemies!

Pancratius. You are young, and the blood mounts rapidly into your brain; but will the hour of combat find you more resolute than myself?

Leonard. Think well what you are doing. The nobles, weak and exhausted, have fled for refuge to the famous fortress of the Holy Trinity,¹ and await our arrival, as men wait the knife of the guillotine.

Forward, citizen, attack them without delay, and it is over with them forever!

Pancratius. It can make no difference; they have lost the old energy of their caste in luxury and idleness. To-morrow or the next day they must fall, what matter which?

Leonard. What and whom do you fear, and why do you delay?

Pancratius. I fear nothing. I act but in accordance with my own will.

Leonard. And am I to trust it blindly?

Pancratius. Yes. Blindly.

Leonard. You may betray us, citizen!

Pancratius. Betrayal rings forever from your lips like the refrain of an old song.

But hush! not so loud—if any one should hear us ...

Leonard. There are no spies here; and what if some one should hear us?

Pancratius. Nothing; only five balls in your heart for having ventured to raise your voice a tone too high in my presence. (*Approaching close to him.*) Leonard, trust me, and be tranquil!

Leonard. I confess I have been too hasty, but I fear no punishment. If my death could help the cause of the down-trodden masses, I would cheerfully die.

Pancratius. You are full of life, hope, faith. Happiest of men, I will not rob you of the bliss of existence.

Leonard. What do you say, citizen?

Pancratius. Think more; speak less; the time will come when you will fully understand me!

Have you collected the provisions for the carousal of the millions?

Leonard. They have all been sent to the arsenal under guard.

Pancratius. Has the contribution from the shoemakers been received?

¹ A renowned fort in Polish history. It stood on the old battlefield between Turkey and Poland, between Europe and Asia.

Leonard. It has. Every one gave with the greatest eagerness; it amounts to a hundred thousand.
Pancratius. They must all be invited to a general festival to-morrow.

Have you heard nothing of Count Henry?

Leonard. I despise the nobles too deeply to credit what I hear of him. The dying race have no energy left; it is impossible they should dare or venture aught.

Pancratius. And yet it is true that he is collecting and training his serfs and peasants, and, confiding in their devotion and attachment to himself, intends leading them to the relief of the fortress of the Holy Trinity.

Leonard. Who can oppose us? *The ideas of our century stand incorporated in us!*

Pancratius. I am determined to see Count Henry, to gaze into his eyes, to read the very depths of his brave spirit, to win him over to the glorious cause of the people.

Leonard. An aristocrat, body and soul!

Pancratius. True: but also a Poet!

Good night, Leonard, I would be alone.

Leonard. Have you forgiven me, citizen?

Pancratius. Sleep in peace: if I had not forgiven you, you would ere this have slept the eternal sleep.

Leonard. And will nothing take place to-morrow?

Pancratius. Good night, and pleasant dreams!

Leonard is retiring.

Ho, Leonard!

Leonard. Citizen general?

Pancratius. You will accompany me day after morrow on my visit to Count Henry.

Leonard. I will obey.

Exit Leonard.

Pancratius. How is it that this man, Count Henry, still dares to resist and defy *me*, the ruler of millions? His forces will bear no comparison with mine; indeed he stands almost alone, although it is true that some hundred or two of peasants, confiding blindly in his word and clinging to him as the dog clings to his master, still cluster round him—but that is all folly, and can amount to nothing. Why, then, do I long to see him, long to win him to our side? Has my spirit for the first time encountered its equal? Can it progress no farther in the path in which he stands to oppose me? His resistance is the last obstacle to be overcome—he must be overthrown—and then? ... and then! ...

O my cunning intellect! Canst thou not deceive *thyself* as thou hast deceived others?...

Shame! thou shouldst know thine own might! Thou art *thought*, the intelligence and reason of the people—the ruler of the masses—thou controllest the millions, so that their will and giant force is *one* with *thine*—all authority and government are incarnated and concentrated in thee alone—all that would be crime in others is in thee fame and glory—thou hast given name and place to unknown and obscure men—thou hast given faith and eloquence to beings who had been almost robbed of moral sentiment—thou hast created a new world in thine own image, and *art thyself its god!* and yet ... and yet ... thou art wandering in unknown wastes, and fearest to be lost thyself—to go astray!

Thou knowest not thyself, nor of what thou art capable; thou rulest others, yet doubt'st thyself—thou knowest not what thou art—whither thou goest—nor whence thou earnest! No ... no.... Thou art sublime!

Sinks upon a chair in silent thought.

A forest, with a cleared hill in its midst, upon which stands a gallows; huts, tents, watchfires, barrels, tables, and crowds of men. The Man disguised in a dark cloak and red liberty cap, and holding the Baptized Jew by the hand.

The Man. Remember!

The Baptized (*in a whisper*). Upon my honor, I will lead your excellency aright, I will not betray you.

The Man. Give but one suspicious wink, raise but a finger, and my bullet finds its way to your heart! You may readily imagine that I attach no great value to your life when I thus lightly risk my own.

The Baptized. Oh woe! You press my hand like a vice of steel. What is it you wish me to do?

The Man. Appear to the crowd as if I were an acquaintance—treat me as a newly arrived friend. What kind of a dance is that?

The Baptized. The dance of a free people.

Men and woman dance, leap, and sing round the gallows.

Their Chorus. Bread! meat! work! wood in winter, rest in summer! Hurrah! hurrah!

God had no compassion upon us: Hurrah! hurrah!

Kings had no compassion upon us: Hurrah! hurrah!

The nobles had no compassion upon us: Hurrah! hurrah!

We renounce God, kings, and nobles: Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

The Man (*to a maiden*). I am glad to see you look so gay, so blooming.

The Maiden. I am sure we have waited quite long enough for such a day as this! I have washed dishes and cleaned knives and forks all my life, without ever having heard a kind word spoken to me: it is high time I too should begin to eat, to dance, to make merry. Hurrah! hurrah!

The Man. Dance, citizeness!

The Baptized. For God's sake, be cautious, count! You may be recognized; let us go!

The Man. If any one should recognize me, you are lost. We will mingle with the throng.

The Baptized. A crowd of servants are sitting under the shade of this oak.

The Man. Let us approach them.

First Servant. I have just killed my first master.

Second Servant. And I am on the search for my baron. Your health, citizens!

Valet de Chambre. In the sweat of our brows, in the depths of humiliation, licking the dust from the boots of our masters, and prostrate before them, we have yet always felt our rights as men: let us drink the health of our present society!

Chorus of Servants. Here's to the health of our citizen President! one of ourselves, he will lead us to glory!

Valet de Chambre. Thanks, citizens, thanks!

Chorus of Servants. Out of dark kitchens, dressing rooms, and antechambers, our prisons of old, we rush together into freedom: Hurrah!

We know the ridiculous follies, peevishness, and perversity of our masters; we have been behind the shows and shams of glittering halls: Hurrah!

The Man. Whose voices are those I hear so harsh and wild from that little mound on our left?

The Baptized. The butchers are singing a chorus.

Chorus of the Butchers. The cleaver and axe are our weapons; our life is in the slaughter house; we know the hue of blood, and care not if we kill *cattle* or *nobles*!

Children of blood and strength, we look with indifference upon the pale and weak; he who needs us, has us; we slaughter beeves for the nobles; the nobles for the people!

The cleaver and axe are our arms; our life is in the slaughter house: Hurrah for the slaughter house! the slaughter house! the slaughter house! the slaughter house!

The Man. Come! I like the next group better; honor and philosophy are at least named in it. Good evening, madame!

The Baptized. It would be better if your excellency should say, 'citizeness,' or 'woman of freedom.'

Woman. What do you mean by the title, 'madame?' From whence did it come? Fie! fie! you smell of mould!

The Man. Pardon my mistake!

Woman. I am as free as you, I am a free woman; I give my love freely to the community, because they have acknowledged my right to lavish it where I will!

The Man. And have the community given you for it these jewelled rings, these chains of violet amethysts?... O thrice beneficent community!

The Woman. No, the community did not give them to me; but at my emancipation I took these things secretly from the casket of my husband, for he was my enemy, the enemy of freedom, and had long held me enslaved!

The Man. Citizeness, I wish you a most agreeable promenade!

They pass on.

Who is this marvellous-looking warrior leaning upon a two-edged sword, with a death's head upon his cap, another upon his badge, and a third upon his breast? Is he not the famous Bianchetti, a condottiere employed by the people, as the condottieri once were by the kings and nobles?

The Baptized. Yes, it is Bianchetti; he has been with us for the last eight or ten days.

The Man (*to Bianchetti*). What is General Bianchetti considering with so much attention?

Bianchetti. Look through this opening in the woods, citizen, and you will see a castle upon a hill: with my glass I can see the walls, ramparts, bastions, etc.

The Man. It will be hard to take, will it not?

Bianchetti. Kings and devils! it can be surrounded by subterranean passages, undermined, and....

The Baptized (*winking at Bianchetti*). Citizen general....

The Man (*in a whisper to the Baptized*). Look under my cloak how the cock of my pistol is raised!

The Baptized (*aside*). Oh woe!—(*Aloud.*) How do you mean to conduct the siege, citizen general?

Bianchetti. Although you are my brother in freedom, you are not my confidant in strategy. After the capitulation of the castle, my plans will be made public.

The Man (*to the Baptized*). Take my advice, Jew, and strike him dead, for such is the beginning of all aristocracies.

A Weaver. Curses! curses! curses!

The Man. Poor fellow! what are you doing under this tree, and why do you look so pale and wild?

The Weaver. Curses upon the merchants and manufacturers! All the best years of my life, years in which other men love maidens, meet in wide plains, or sail upon vast seas, with free air and open space around them, I have spent in a narrow, dark, gloomy room, chained like a galley slave to a silk loom!

The Man. Take some food! Empty the full cup which you hold in your hand!

Weaver. I have not strength enough left to carry it to my lips! I am so tired; I could scarcely crawl up here—it is the day of freedom! but a day of freedom is not for me—it comes too late, too late!—(*He falls, and gasps out:*) Curses upon the manufacturers who make silks! upon the merchants, who buy them! upon the nobles, who wear them! Curses! curses! curses!

He writhes on the ground and dies.

The Baptized. What a ghastly corpse!

The Man. Baptized Jew, citizen, poltroon of freedom, look upon this lifeless head, shining in the blood-red rays of the setting sun! Where are now your words and promises; the equality, perfectibility, and universal happiness of the human race?

The Baptized (*aside*). May you soon fall into a like ruin, and the dogs tear the flesh from your rotting corpse!—(*Aloud*.) I beg that your excellency will now permit me to return, that I may give an account of my embassy!

The Man. You may say that, believing you to be a spy, I forcibly detained you.—(*Looking around him*.) The tumult and noise of the carousal is dying away behind us; before us there is nothing to be seen but fir and pine trees bathed in the crimson rays of sunset.

The Baptized. Clouds are gathering thick and fast over the tops of the trees: had you not better return to your people, Count Henry, who have been waiting so long for you in the vault of St. Ignatius?

The Man. Thank you for your exceeding care of me, Sir Jew! But back! I will return and take another look at the festival of the citizens.

Voices (*under the trees*). The children of Ham bid good night to thee, old Sun!

Voice (*on the right*). Here's to thy health, old enemy! Thou hast long driven us on to unpaid work, and awaked us early to unheeded pain! Ha! ha! When thou risest upon us to-morrow, thou wilt find us with fish and flesh: now off to the devil, empty glass!

The Baptized. The bands of peasants are coming this way.

The Man. You shall not leave me. Place yourself behind this tree trunk, and be silent!

Chorus of Peasants. Forward, forward, under the white tents to meet our brethren! Forward, forward, under the green shade of the beeches, to rest, to sleep, to pleasant sunset greetings!

Our maidens there await us; there await us our slaughtered oxen, the old teams of our ploughs!

A Voice. I am pulling and dragging him on with all my strength—now he turns and defends himself—down! down among the dead!

Voice of the Dying Noble. My children, pity! pity!

Second Voice. Chain me to your land and make me work without pay again—will you!

Third Voice. My only son fell under the blows of your lash, old lord; either wake him from the dead, or die to join him!

Fourth Voice. The children of Ham drink thy health, old lord! they beg thee for forgiveness, lord!

Chorus of Peasants (*passing on out of sight*). A vampire sucked our blood, and lived upon our strength:

We have caught the vampire, he shall escape no more!

By Satan, thou shalt hang as high as a great lord should!

By Satan, thou shalt die high, high above us all!

Death to the nobles; tyrants were they all!

Drink, food, and rest for us; poor, weary, hungry, thirsty, naked!

Your bodies shall lie like sheaves upon our fields; the ruins of your castles fly like chaff beneath the flail of the thresher!

Voice. The children of Ham will dance merrily round their bonfires!

The Man. I cannot see the face of the murdered noble, they throng so thickly round him.

The Baptized. It is in all probability a friend or relation of your excellency!

The Man. I despise him, and hate you!

Poetry will sweeten all this horror hereafter. Forward, Jew, forward!

They disappear among the trees.

Another part of the forest. A mound upon which watchfires are burning. A procession of people bearing torches.

The Man (*appearing among them with the Baptized*). These drooping branches have torn my liberty cap into tatters.

Ha! what hell of flame is this throwing its crimson light into the gloom, and leaping through these heavily fringed walls of the forest?

The Baptized. We have wandered from our way while seeking the pass of St. Ignatius. We must retrace our steps immediately, for this is the spot in which Leonard celebrates the solemnities of the New Faith!

The Man. Forward, in the name of God! I must see these solemnities. Fear nothing, Jew, no one will recognize us.

The Baptized. Be prudent; our lives hang on a breath!

The Man. What enormous ruins are these scattered around us! This ponderous pile must have lasted centuries before it fell!

Pillars, pedestals, capitals, fallen arches—ha! I am treading upon the broken remnants of an escutcheon. Bas-reliefs of exquisite sculpture are scattered about upon the earth! Heavens! that is the sweet face of the Virgin Mother shining through the heart of the darkness! The light flickers, I can see it no more. Here are the slight-fluted shafts of a shrine, panes of colored glass with cherub heads, a carved railing of bronze, and now, in the light of yonder torch, I see the half of a monumental figure of a reclining knight in armor thrown upon the burnt and withered grass: Where am I, Jew?

The Baptized. You are passing through the graveyard of the last church of the Old Faith; our people labored forty days and forty nights without intermission to destroy it; it seemed built for eternal ages.

The Man. Your songs and hymns, ye new men, grate harshly on my ears!

Dark forms are moving forward in every direction, from before us, behind us, and from either side; lights and shadows, driven to and fro by the wind, float like living spirits through the throng.

A Passer-by. I greet you, citizens, in the name of freedom!

Second Passer-by. I greet you in the name of the slaughter of the nobles!

Third Passer-by. The priests chant the praise of freedom; why do you not hasten forward?

The Baptized. We cannot resist the pressure of the throng; they drive us on from every side.

The Man. Who is this young man standing in front of us, mounted upon the ruins of the shrine? Three flames burn beneath him, his face shines from the midst of fire and smoke, his voice rings like the shriek of a maniac; and his gestures are rapid and eager?

The Baptized. That is Leonard, the inspired and enthusiastic prophet of freedom. Our priests, our philosophers, our poets, our artists, with their daughters and loved ones, are standing round him.

The Man. Ha, I understand; your aristocracy! Point out to me the man who sent you to seek an interview with me.

The Baptized. He is not here.

Leonard. Fly to my arms; cling to my lips; come to me, my beautiful bride! Independent, free, stripped of the veils of hypocrisy, full of love, untrammelled from the chilling fetters of prejudice, come to me, thou chosen one of the lovely daughters of freedom!

Voice of a Maiden. I fly to thee, beloved one!

Second Maiden. Look upon me! I stretch forth my arms to thee, but have sunk fainting among the ruins; I cannot rise, and have only strength left to turn to thee, beloved!

Third Maiden. I have outstripped them all; through cinders and ashes, flame and smoke, I fly to thee, beloved!

The Man. With long, dishevelled hair far floating on the wind, with snowy bosom panting with wild excitement, she clammers up the smoking ruins to his arms!

The Baptized. Thus is it every night.

Leonard. To me! to me! my bliss, my rapture! Lovely daughter of freedom, thou tremblest with delicious, god-like madness!

Inspiration, flood my soul! Listen to me, all ye people, for now will I prophesy unto you!

The Man. Her head sinks on his bosom; she faints in his arms.

Leonard. Look upon us, ye people! we offer you an image of the human race, freed from trammels, and risen into new life from the death of forms. We stand upon the ruins of old dogmas, of old gods; yea, glory unto us, for we have torn the old gods limb from limb!

They have rotted into dust; our spirits have conquered theirs; their very souls have fallen into the abyss of nothingness!

Chorus of Women. Happy among women is the bride of the prophet: we stand below and envy her glory!

Leonard. I announce to you a new world; to a new god I have given the heavens; to the god of freedom and of bliss, the god of the people; every offering of their vengeance, the piled corpses of their oppressors, be his fitting altar! The old tears and agonies of humanity will be forever swept away in an ocean of blood!

We now inaugurate the perpetual happiness of men; freedom and equality belong of right to all!

Damnation and the gallows to him who would reorganize the Past; to him who would conspire against the common fraternity!

Chorus of Men. The towers of superstition, of tyranny, of pride, have fallen, have fallen! To him who would save one stone from the old buildings—damnation and death!

The Baptized (*aside*). Ye blasphemers of Jehovah, I thrice spew you forth to destruction!

The Man. Keep but thy promise, Eagle, and I will build on this very spot and upon their bowed necks a new temple to the Son of God, the Merciful!

A Confused cry from mingling Voices. Freedom! Equality! Bliss! Hurrah! hurrah!

Chorus of the New Priests. Where are the lords, where are the kings, who lately walked the earth with crown and sceptre, ruled with pride and scorn?

First Murderer. I killed King Alexander.

Second Murderer. I stabbed King Henry.

Third Murderer. I murdered King Immanuel!

Leonard. Go on without fear; murder without a sting of conscience!

Remember that you are the Elect of the Elect; the Holy among the Holy; the brave heroes and blessed martyrs of equality and freedom!

Chorus of Murderers. We go in the darkness of night; we move in the gloom of the shadow! With the dagger firmly clutched in our unsparing hands, we go, we go!

Leonard (*to the Maiden*). Arouse thee, my beautiful and free!

A loud clap of thunder is heard.

Reply to the living god of thunder: raise high the hymn of strength! Follow me all, all! Let us once more trample under our feet the ruined temple of the dead God!

The Maiden. I glow with love to thee and to thy god! I will share my love with the whole world: I glow! I glow!

The Man. Some one blocks the way; he falls upon his knees, raises his joined hands, struggles, sighs, sobs....

The Baptized. He is the son of a famous philosopher.

Leonard. What do you demand, Herman?

Herman. High priest, give me the Sacrament of Murder!

Leonard (*to the Priests*). Give me the oil, the dagger, and the poison!—(To Herman.) With the sacred oil once used to anoint kings, I now anoint thee to their destruction!

The arm once used by knights and nobles, I give thee now for their destruction!

I hang upon thy breast this flask of poison, that where the sword cannot reach, it may gnaw, corrode, and burn the bowels of the tyrants!

Go, and destroy the old race in all parts of the world!

The Man. He is gone! I see him, at the head of a band of assassins, crossing the crest of the nearest hill.

The Baptized. They turn, they approach us, we must move out of their way!

The Man. No. I will dream this dream to its end!

The Baptized (*aside*). I thrice spew thee forth to destruction!—(*To the Man*). Leonard might recognize me, your excellency. Do you not see the knife glittering upon his breast?

The Man. Wrap yourself up in my cloak. What ladies are those dancing before him you call Leonard?

The Baptized. Princesses and countesses who have forsaken their husbands.

The Man. Once my angels!!

The people now surround him on every side, I can see him no longer, I only know by the retreating music that he is going farther from us. Follow me, Jew, we can see him better up here!

He clammers up the parapet of a wall.

The Baptized. Woe! woe! We will certainly be discovered.

The Man. There, now I can see him again! Ha! other women are with him now, pale, confused, trembling, following him convulsively; the son of the philosopher foams and brandishes his dagger; they are stopping by the ruins of the North Tower.

They remain standing for a moment, they climb upon the ruins, they tear them down, they pull the shrine apart, they throw coals upon the prostrate altars, the votive wreaths, the holy pictures; the fire kindles, columns of smoke darken all before me: Woe to the destroyers! Woe!

Leonard. Woe to the men who still bow down before the dead God!

The Man. Dark masses of the people turn and drive upon us.

The Baptized. O Father Abraham!

The Man. Old Eagle of glory, is it not true that my hour is not yet come?

The Baptized. We are lost!

Leonard (*stopping immediately in front of Count Henry*). Who are you with that haughty face, citizen, and why do you not join in the solemnities?

The Man. I hastened here when I heard of the revolution; I am a murderer of the Spanish league, and have only arrived to-day.

Leonard. Who is that man hiding himself in the folds of your mantle?

The Man. He is my younger brother. He has taken an oath to show his face to no one, until he has at least killed a baron.

Leonard. Of whose murder can you yourself boast?

The Man. My elder brothers consecrated me only two days before my departure, and....

Leonard. Whom do you think of killing?

The Man. You in the first place, if you should prove false to us!

Leonard. For this use, brother, take my dagger!

Hands it to him.

The Man. For such use my own will suffice me, brother!

Many Voices. Long live Leonard! Long live the Spanish murderer!

Leonard. Meet me to-morrow in the tent of Pancratius, our citizen general.

Chorus of Priests. We greet thee, stranger, in the name of the Spirit of Liberty: we intrust to thy hand a share of our emancipation!

To men who combat without cessation, who kill without pity or weakness, who work for freedom by day, and dream of it by night, will be at last the victory!

They pass on out of sight.

Chorus of Philosophers. We have wakened the human race, and torn them away from the days of childhood! We have found truth, and brought it to light from the womb of darkness! Combat, murder, and die for it, brethren!

The Son of the Philosopher (*to the Man*). Brother and friend, I drink your health out of the skull of an old saint! May we soon meet again!

A Maiden (*dancing*). Kill Prince John for me!

Second Maiden. Count Henry for me!

Children. Bring us back the head of a noble for a ball.

Other Voices. Good fortune guide your daggers home!

Chorus of Artists. On these sublime old ruins we build no temples more; we paint no pictures, mould no statues for forgotten shrines; our arches shall be formed of pointed pikes and naked blades; our pillars built of ghastly piles of human skulls; the capitals of human hair dyed in gushing streams of crimson blood; our altar shall be white as snow, our god will rest upon it, the cap of liberty: Hurrah! hurrah!

Other Voices. On! on! the morning dawn already breaks!

The Baptized. They will soon catch and hang us; we are but one step from the gallows.

The Man. Fear nothing, Jew, they follow Leonard, and observe us no longer. I see with my own eyes, I understand with my own mind, and for the last time before it engulfs me, the chaos now generating in the abyss of Time, in the womb of Darkness, for my own destruction, for the annihilation of my brethren!

Driven on by madness, stung by despair, my thoughts awake in all their strength....

O God! give me again the power which Thou didst not of old deny me, and I will condense this new and fearful world, which does not understand itself, into *one* burning word, but which one word will be the Poetry of the entire Past!

Voice in the Air. Poet, thou chant'st a drama!

The Man. Thanks for thy good counsel!

Revenge for the desecrated ashes of my fathers—malediction upon the new races! their whirlpool is around me, but it shall not draw me into the giddy and increasing circles of its abyss! Keep but thy promise, Eagle; Eagle of glory!

Jew, I am ready now for the vault of St. Ignatius!

The Baptized. The day dawns; I can go no farther.

The Man. Lead me on until we strike the right path; I will then release you!

The Baptized. Why do you drag me on through mist, through thorns and briars, through ashes and embers, over heaps of ruins? Let me go, I entreat!

The Man. Forward! forward! and descend with me!

The last songs of the people are dying away behind us; a few torches here and there just glimmer through the gloom!

Ha! under those hoary trees drooping with the night dew, and through this curdling, whitening vapor, see you not the giant shadow of the dead Past? Hark! hear you not that wailing chant?

The Baptized. Everything is shrouded in the thickening mist; at every step we descend, deeper, deeper!

Chorus of Wood Spirits. Let us weep for Christ, the persecuted, martyred Jesus!

Where is our God; where is His church?

The Man. Unsheathe the sword—to arms! to arms!

I will restore Him to you; upon thousands and thousands of crosses will I crucify His enemies!

Chorus of Spirits. We kept guard by day and night around the altar and the holy graves; upon untiring wings we bore the matin chime and vesper bell to the ear of the believer; our voices floated on the organ's peal! In the glitter of the stained and rainbow panes, the shadows of the vaulted domes,

the light of the holy chalice, the blessed consecration of the Body of our Lord—was our whole life centred!

Woe! woe! what will become of us?

The Man. It is growing lighter; their dim forms fade and melt into the red of morn!

The Baptized. Here lies your way: this is the entrance to the Pass.

The Man. Hail! Christ Jesus and my sword! (*He tears off the liberty cap, throws it upon the ground, and casts pieces of silver upon it.*) Take together the Thing and the Image for a remembrance!

The Baptized. You pledge your word to me for the honorable treatment of him who will visit you at midnight?

The Man. An old noble never repeats or breaks a promise!

Hail! Christ Jesus and our swords!

Voices (*from the depths of the Pass*). Mary and our swords! Long live our lord, Count Henry!

The Man. My faithful followers, to me—to me!

Aid me, Mary, and Christ Jesus!

Night. Trees and shrubbery. Pancratius, Leonard, and attendants.

Pancratius (*to his attendants*). Lie upon this spot with your faces to the turf, remain perfectly still, kindle no fires, beat no signals, and, unless you hear the report of firearms, stir not until the dawn of day!

Leonard. I once more conjure you, citizen!

Pancratius. Lean against this tall pine, Leonard, and pass the night in reflection.

Leonard. I pray you, Pancratius, take me with you! Remember, you are about to intrust yourself alone with an aristocrat, a betrayer, an oppressor....

Pancratius (*interrupting him, and impatiently gesturing to him to remain behind*). The old nobles seldom broke a plighted promise!

A vast feudal hall in the castle of Count Henry. Pictures of knights and ladies hang upon the walls. A pillar is seen in the background bearing the arms and escutcheons of the family. The Count is seated at a marble table upon which are placed an antique lamp of wrought silver, a jewel-hilted sword, a pair of pistols, an hourglass, and clock. Another table stands on the opposite side, with silver pitchers, decanters, and massive goblets.

The Man. At the same hour, surrounded by appalling perils, agitated by foreboding thoughts, the last Brutus met his Evil Genius.

I await a like apparition. A man without a name, without ancestors, without a faith or guardian angel; a man who is destroying the Past, and who will, in all probability, establish a new era, though himself sprung from the very dust, if I cannot succeed in casting him back into his original nothingness—is now to appear before me!

Spirit of my forefathers! inspire me with that haughty energy which once rendered you the rulers of the world! Give me the lion heart which erst throbbed in your dauntless breasts! Give me your peerless dignity, your noble and chivalric courtesy!

Rekindle in my wavering soul your blind, undoubting, earnest faith in Christ and in His church: at once the source of your noblest deeds on earth, your brightest hopes in heaven! Oh, let it open for me, as it was wont to do for you; and I will struggle with fire and sword against its enemies! Hear me, the son of countless generations, the sole heir of your thoughts, your courage, your virtues, and your faults!

The castle bell sounds twelve.

It is the appointed hour: I am prepared!

An old and faithful servant, Jacob, enters, fully armed.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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